1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

purely ritual acts, and in no respect to be connected with female homosexuality, for which I have no evidence.

CONNEXION WITH ANIMALS

Again arising out of the telling of stories, it appears that intercourse with animals, usually dogs, is known, on the part of both sexes. The talk which followed the story elicited the fact that it does actually occur, but I can form no idea of its frequency. When it formed the subject of a story it was regarded as a joke by the teller—in one case the tale was especially described as a good one—and was received with much laughter by the audience, but there were signs of shame and disgust when we discussed its actual occurrence. This happened in two villages; the reactions of the natives were the same in both.

CONNEXION WITH PLANTS

The legend of origin, according to which the people are said to have sprung from an old woman who was impregnated by means of a banana, has been given in Chapter II. Other instances in which pregnancy is supposed to occur in this manner are given in Chapter III. There are several stories in my collection in which plants, sometimes those possessing aromatic properties, figure in the same role. I give one of these, which is typical of its kind, in case students of sex psychology may see in it some significance.

A woman went to the taro garden, she saw a bush banana, the kind whose stalk is black. She liked it so much that she cut it, and took it to her house, and slept with it. (The phrase here used implies sexual intercourse; it is not clear from my manuscript whether the whole plant or only the fruit is intended.) Then she looked at it, and the skin had come off part of it. Then she thought her man was dead, and she cried over it, and took it up and got red paint and put on it, and got some beads and dressed it up (as is done to the dead). Then she took it and put it in the sea, but it would not sink. So she took it back, and buried it in the bush. Then she set fire to the house where the banana had died (as used to be done to the hut in which a person had died). Then she went and slept in another house.

Another day she went to the bush, and saw a young bush-banana plant coming up, and she said: 'Yes, I think you are the brother of the man I married before, aren't you?' Then she said: 'You stay there just now, by and by you will be big.' Then she went and said to her father: 'Come on, make me another house.' Her father said: 'Why should I

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

to his waist, was pulled out and escorted down the hill where the *wrar* had appeared to the women. He was to be shown to them as a sign that their sons, whom they believed to be eaten by the *wrar*, were alive and well. He was away a long time; meanwhile the novices remained in line, standing as still as they could. Finally he came back laughing, and stood for a while chatting with a group of men beside the line, afterwards taking his place again at the head of it.

Then a procession of older men, some of them quite elderly, came up the slope. Each of them had an *upi* on his head. These were the fathers or brothers of the novices, wearing the new *upi* especially prepared for the boys. They managed their unaccustomed head-gear awkwardly, and looked self-conscious. One let his *upi* fall to the ground; this was greeted with laughter and shouting, and was evidently regarded as a great joke. They stood together in close formation, stamping their feet in rhythm and shouting. Then they walked several times round the line of novices. Two of them carried *upi* of enormous size, with very elaborate patterns on them, coloured red and white. These were laid for a second on the head of each novice in turn, one man going up the line and one down, so that each boy had both *upi* put on his head. I learned subsequently that these were the *upi* worn by the *wrar* figures. They are the sign of the *wagi'upi*, i.e. the novices of *tmauun* lineage. But they are put on to the heads of all the boys in turn because all—*tmauun* and commoners—are going through the *wapi* ceremony together.

After this the boys' own *upi* were put on. Everybody crowded round to help to fasten them. Some had to be fixed with the aid of sticks and bits of rag, as the hair was not long enough to keep them in place. When all were fitted, the line broke up in confusion. The ceremonial *upi* were carried up the hill to the shed where the *wrar* figures were. The newly invested novices, henceforward themselves known as *upi*, strutted about, evidently feeling very important, and, judging by their furtive lifting of hands to steady the clumsy head-gear, more than a little uncomfortable.

By this time the sun was getting low, and as most of the visitors had a long way to walk home, the gathering soon dispersed. The initiates went back to the bush, where they were to remain till they had learned how to keep the *upi* in place, after which, on the performance of another ceremony (to be subsequently described), they would return to their own villages.

3: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1932
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

539 sun, and there is no other story connected with the sun in my
821 collection. Mr. A. M. Hocart tells me, in conversation, that
171 stories connected with the sun are rare in his experience of Melanesia. Thurnwald[6] offers the following explanation: "Man beschäftigt sich, wie diese Sagen zeigen, sehr viel mit dem Mond, den man fürchtet, der sich immer *verändert*, aber verhältnismässig nur sehr wenig mit der durch ihr Licht *sichernd* wirkenden Sonne."

Class. IV. Real-Life Stories.

538 The tales in this class are sometimes about certain individuals, but more often about men, women and children who remain nameless. They consist of incidents of every-day life, hunting, fishing and domestic scenes, such as might happen to any native at any time. Perhaps we might compare them to that class of reading matter among ourselves known as "magazine stories". They are full of details the understanding of which requires a somewhat intimate knowledge of native customs and conditions, but with the appropriate explanations they have much light to throw upon the reactions of the natives to certain situations, their relations with each other, and many other aspects of their lives. Some of these tales are obviously
● [522] intended to be comic, a favourite subject being the trickster who is himself tricked. The following brief tale will serve as well as any other to illustrate this class which is a very large one.

Revenge for a Poor Feast.

Told by Koawu, old man of Kurtatchi.

539 The people went fishing, they took nets, they took nets to catch *bari* (a small reef fish.) They went fishing on the reef, and one man caught one *bari*. Then they sent a message to another village to come and eat, and all the people came, they came to eat, they all looked about in

[6] R. Thurnwald, *Forschungen auf den Salomo-Inseln und dem Bismarck Archipel*, vol. i., p. 336.